



## *Reflections of the pastor 6.10.17*

How wonderful to experience again the miracle of spring. Once the trees have leaves again and flowers are blooming it's hard to remember the harshness of our long winter months. God gives us such a variety of experiences here in Winnipeg just through our weather. How blessed we are!

**Easter.** Thanks to so many, our Lenten observance was holy and an effective preparation for the greatest liturgy of the Christian calendar, the Easter Triduum. It buoyed my heart to worship with so many through those entire three days! And so many people worked to make the liturgies beautiful and meaningful, lectors, altar servers, decorators, and so many others we can take for granted, like George Poritsanos who has been preparing the wood etc. for the Holy Saturday blessing of the new fire for over 25 years! Thanks to them, the Liturgy Committee, and all the co-ordinators and collaborators for giving their time, energy, and talents in preparing for the Lenten and Easter Liturgies. Thanks also to the team for preparing the Easter vigil reception and to the Knights for serving the refreshments. A special thanks for Chris P. for providing the refreshments!

**Sharing God's Gifts & Finances.** On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 we still owed \$70,000.00 on our obligations in supporting the ministries of our Archdiocese for year 2016, Sharing God's Gifts. The great news? As of June 4th, 2017 our debt to Sharing God's Gifts for year 2016 is paid! Congratulations!! Thank you, everyone, for your generosity and for your patience with our alternate week extra collection. Further good news is that by the new calculation our obligations for Sharing God's Gifts in 2017 is \$59,000.00. Wouldn't it be wonderful to clear off that obligation by December 31, 2017 and begin the next year with a clean slate on that front. We still encourage parishioners to use Pre-authorized Contributions especially to help keep our cash flow for the summer months.

Thanks to Indira and the office staff for getting the tax receipts ready and thanks to our Knights for assisting in distributing them to families—lots of postage cost was saved! Those receipts not picked up were mailed out by the end of March.

**Parish Ministry.** Thanks to our School and Sunday School staffs and all the other volunteers who prepared our children for sacraments this year. Close to 50 celebrated first reconciliation and more than 50 received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time, and 65 of our youth were confirmed by our chief shepherd, Archbishop Gagnon, in our Church on May 16<sup>th</sup>! It was a wonderful celebration.

There were two very successful and enjoyable celebrations in our Hall in the early part of this year. The afternoon Coffee house in January brought many parishioners and friends to visit and meet our refugee families and raised money to support them. The El Sitio dinner in February was sold out the week before the event took place!

Thanks to the Committee of St. Ignatius and St. Kateri for organizing the beautiful Truth and Reconciliation sessions on two successive Thursdays. Over 70 persons attended both! We look forward for more efforts encouraging reconciliation with our brothers and sisters who were greatly harmed as our Canadian nation of 150 years was forged.

We are blessed in our Education Centre. So many programs were offered this year, to name just a few: RCIA, continuing programs for persons to learn about and grow in Ignatian spirituality (including the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius), the healing ministry course, sessions on Bishop Baron's series of Jesus, Priest, Prophet, and King, a series of presentations on topics concerning death, a session on stories witnessing to Faith by people in our midst. Thank you to Valerie Forrest and all those who made these possible.

**Archdiocesan Synod.** We've been praying at every second Sunday Mass for blessings on our Archdiocesan Synod. The Synod moves into a new phase this fall with 4/5 Synodal Sessions. Our Archbishop has begun the process of appointing Delegates for these. The Pastor/Administrator of each parish/mission has been asked to nominate three candidates.

**Knights of Columbus and Maintenance.** Thanks to our Knights for their constant efforts to support our parish community. Besides providing us with regular pancake breakfasts, raising funds for the church by sale of grocery gift cards, assisting at practically every major liturgical event and social event (and recently purchasing and setting up a portable AV large screen!), they have been enthusiastic in a painting program in the Education Centre. Since January they have repainted the classroom, the board room, and most of the rooms on the main floor in the Ed Centre. Because of their efforts, Chris Janes managed to save enough funds to replace the ceiling of the library.

We continue striving to be 'green'— our window replacement program is already bearing fruit. Windows on the north side of the Ed Centre have been replaced and to date we have recovered close to a third of their cost already in energy saving. The LED light replacements program continues— the plan is to replace the lights in the hall this summer.

**Our Parish Future and Elevator.** The PPC (Parish Pastoral Committee) has begun an evaluation of documents which were the beginning of a discernment process begun five years ago. We hope an assessment of these will continue the process and will help to determine where we go from here to realize the hopes for the parish for the next ten years. Our dream elevator is an essential part of that hope but it needs a broader context for where it fits in determining the effectiveness of our ministry at St. Ignatius Parish. A committee is also forming to map out a comprehensive plan for a more effective and efficient use of our plant.

**Youth Ministry:** In just seven months our new youth ministry coordinator has made a good start. Lynne Campbell has set up a Facebook page and has been working with the Archdiocesan representative to communicate to our youth the programs they can participate in at St. Ignatius and the Archdiocese. Lynne is in the process now of assisting our staff and volunteers to be up dated in protocols for volunteers and information regarding the safety of our young people, a requirement of the Archdiocese and our Insurers. Lynne is currently working on creating an exciting Vacation Bible School program for our children this summer.

**Our School.** Registration for the fall is in fine shape. There were 34 applications for bursary assistance for fall of 2017. The Bursary Committee has recommended the approval of bursaries totalling \$43,350.00. Over the summer months, the school will also be getting some upgrades to the gymnasium. Thank you to the St. Ignatius School Parents Advisory Council (SISPAC) for their \$3,500.00 donation and to Logan Griffiths in Grade 8 who raised over \$1,300.00 through sales of bracelets that he made. The school has raised most of the money needed to paint the gym and replace the old score board.

The first year of the new School music program has gone well. Because of an initial false start, there has been a delay in completing the music room project. The building permit is still pending, but the project is getting on track. The cost will be greater than anticipated because of new code requirements.

Now that the summer has begun, may all enjoy all that God offers us in beauty and joy of the summer sunshine and water and green. May God continually bless you.



Peace and prayers,

*R. Frank Albright*